

# Attleboro Land Trust News

September 2019



By the Education and Outreach Committee and Attleboro High School

## In This Issue

**Evidence of Past Lives at the Richardson Preserve**

**Tree Facts and Connections**

**Community Garden News**

**Gardening 101: Composting**

**What's Happening at the Barrows' Farm in 1719**

**Updates, Comments, and Interesting Reading**

**Trail Safety**

**Buy Local Farm Products for Better Taste and Nutrition**

**Guided Walk Through Anthony Lawrence Wildlife Preserve**



C. Adler

Watershed Walk

## Upcoming Events

**"Beholding the Beauty of Trees"  
by Phil Boucher**

**9:00 - 10:30 am, Saturday, Sept 14, Richardson Nature Preserve**

**"Conserving our Oceans"  
7:00 – 8:00pm Sept 25  
Attleboro Public Library**

## What's Going on at the Land Trust?

The microburst storm has damaged some Land Trust properties, in particular, Richardson Nature Preserve, Nickerson Walking Woods, Vaughn Memorial Forest, and Colman Reservation, plus Audubon Attleboro Springs. Work is ongoing to repair all the damage. We can use more volunteers with chainsaws. Call 508-259-7979.

The Colonial Garden fared OK from the storm, but not well from the groundhog, rabbits, mice and chipmunks that have eaten the tops off most of the bean, pumpkin, and squash plants. A disappointment for the students. The groundhog and rabbits have been relocated to other parts of the property. Who knew rabbits liked cantaloupe?

The Attleboro Community Garden held a "Harvest Day" plus a "Preserving your Harvest" workshop on August 10 with the proceeds going to the Hebron Food Bank. Picture below.

On August 10, Ben Cote and Don Doucette of the "Friends of the Ten Mile" led an informative "Getting to Know Your Watershed" walk along the Ten Mile River starting from Larsen Woodlands and proceeding to the confluence of the Ten Mile and the Bungay rivers on Water Street.

[attleborolandtrust.org/walking-our-watershed/](http://attleborolandtrust.org/walking-our-watershed/)

A work party was held at the Anthony Lawrence Wildlife Preserve on August 17 to clear and repair the trails on the property.

August 24, Gary Krofta and Charlie Adler led a nature walk at the Lawrence Wildlife Preserve.

Story on last page.



## Evidence of Past Lives at the Richardson Preserve

It was a beautiful summer day on July 13, 2019, when Bill Lewis, history buff and ALT board member, guided more than 20 visitors through the Deborah and Roger Richardson Nature Preserve for a fun and informative history lesson and tour of the Barrows Farm house and trails.

As I swatted away mosquitoes on that hot day, I wondered how the Barrows family survived without modern amenities. How many people lived in this small house?



The ALT acquired the Barrows property in June 2016, 310 years after Benajah Barrows married Lydia Bucklin and started building this house and developing the family farm, sawmill and coopering (cask making) business. When Benajah and Lydia moved into the house in 1708 with their first child, who was born the year before in Rehoboth, Wilmarth Street did not yet exist, and the tiny house was only a third the size it is today with a small central fieldstone fireplace. The two had eight children together between 1707 and 1724. Sadly, Lydia died in January 1725 at the age of only 44 when her youngest was only three months old.

We peeked in the windows and learned from Bill that the kitchen was known as the “dirty room” because of the cooking, and the “clean room”, on the opposite side of the house, was where linen and wool clothing was made with spinning wheels and looms. Bread making was done only once a week because it took the sourdough three days to rise, and the central fireplace used for baking heated up the whole house (even in the summer!). This must have been tough without modern air conditioning as the whole family slept upstairs in the tiny attic. There were windows at each end of the house, but no fans or screens to keep out mosquitoes.

I believe Benajah and Lydia would be proud to know that the ALT is preserving their land and house and telling their story. Also, beyond the house, we passed the garden where Attleboro High School students planted the traditional Colonial “three sisters” garden as part of its Farm to Table and School to Career project with the ALT.

Bill led us along the one-mile Charlie Wyman Trail loop (named for the Land Protection Specialist – See [blogs.massaudubon.org/landprotection/author/charlie-wyman/](https://blogs.massaudubon.org/landprotection/author/charlie-wyman/)) that brings visitors by remnants of two swine pens (look for two short trails off to the left with rock walls that form the pens and imagine timbers and earth covering them), across a field where the Barrows family used to grow varieties of hay and where deer now sleep, into the wooded part where they grew flax for making linen, and over boardwalks built by Sensata volunteers, to enable visitors to stroll over the swampy areas where bog iron grows, yes grows, through the action of bacteria. The smallest member of our group happily found toadstools, princess pine (that she called “tiny Christmas trees”), and a bunny along the way.



We all reluctantly left the Richardson Nature Preserve after the enjoyable tour. I highly recommend visiting the Barrows property – Bring your family and friends for a walk through history! There is another Guided Walk there: “Beholding the Beauty of Trees” on September 14 at 9:00 am.

Sharon Tenglin

**The Attleboro Land Trust is looking for Supporters either by making a Tax-Deductible Contribution and/or as a Conservation Volunteer. Contributions or Sign-ups as a volunteer can be made securely at [Attleborolandtrust.org](https://attleborolandtrust.org) or by mail at Attleboro Land Trust, P.O. Box 453, Attleboro, MA 02703. Thank you for your support.**

# TREE FACTS AND CONNECTIONS

Trees are the tallest, most massive, long-lived organisms ever to grow on earth. They are super survivors mainly because they grow in ways that give them defense systems that are highly effective against infections from wounds and they have the capacity to adjust rapidly to changes that threaten their survival.

To support their massive systems for long periods, trees require high amounts of energy. Trees trap more of the sun's energy than any other group of organisms. In a sense, trees are like big batteries, the biggest on earth. They use energy very efficiently with almost no waste. They pass this energy on to many associates\* and the associates provide many benefits in return to the trees. In this way, trees help soils to remain healthy.



Trees as big batteries, store energy as soluble starch and oils in living cells in the wood of branches, trunks and woody roots. Trees are generating systems that form new cells in new places. In this sense, trees do not heal. Instead, when injured they compartmentalize the wound by using the newly generated cells to form boundaries to isolate the damaged wood from the healthy parts to resist the spread of infection.

Trees regulate their growth within the limits of available energy, water, elements and space. Trees do not grow beyond their means. They are connected in nature with each other and with many communities of other organisms in ways that ensure long-term survival for the trees and their associates. This is called a natural forest or woodland.

Within this complex woodland are supported insects, birds and wildlife of all sizes that depend on the health of these ecosystems to function well for the benefit of all that exist there. In particular, for those of us that find value and pleasure in walking within these environs.

Native pollinators are currently threatened in our region and perhaps worldwide. These are disturbing facts in view of what they do for us when it comes to food production. Through recent findings, it is shown that a healthy forest and woodland in our region supports approximately 520 beneficial insect species that pollinate plants from wildflowers to the tallest trees throughout the growing season.

Woodlands and ecologically important margin areas are sustainable through the use of native plants. These tree facts tell a unique story of how beneficial trees are to humans and how critical healthy individual trees and those in our woodlands need to be in support of a healthy environment. They give us oxygen. Those same leafy canopies cast shade to walk under which cuts down on reflected heat for natural cooling and filters airborne dust particles improving the air that we breathe.

To sum up any and all factors is a small quote from Dr. Shigo, "Trees, people and many living things are connected. Trees and people need each other."

\* refers to the elements that trees provide with food, water, shelter and home nesting and roosting sites to the benefit of healthy soils that the trees depend on. The network that exists between soils, wildlife and trees is essential to a healthy ecosystem.

The facts and information shown here are a very small part of the work of Dr, Alex Shigo, chief scientist US Forest Service and Dr. Douglas Tallamy, University of Delaware.

Phil Boucher

# Attleboro Community Garden News

During the month of August, crops at the Attleboro Community Garden peaked with a bountiful summer harvest. On August 10th gardeners gathered to celebrate the harvest by collecting fresh produce, learned about ways to preserve their harvest, and continued work on the Little Library.



Several gardeners accepted donated produce and gleaned garden plots. They gathered several boxes of tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, peppers, onions, garlic, leeks and herbs which were donated to the Hebron Food Pantry later in the day.

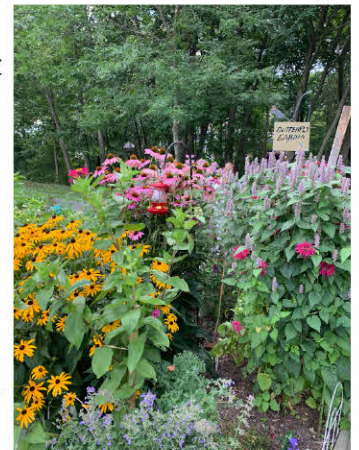


Gardeners Jennifer Pierini-Norton and Courtney Beard conducted an interactive Preserving Your Harvest Workshop. They provided overviews and answered questions on several methods to safely preserve food including dehydration, fermentation and pressure canning.

Claudia Cruz-Teixeira and Jessica Brien continued work on the Little Library and began decorating the structure. The aim is to install the Library at the Garden by the beginning of September.



Although the summer harvest is now starting to wane, the Garden is still full of color. Several gardeners, led by Dalia LaRetonda and Andrea Gambrazzio, have planted flowers around the Garden's border and continued work on the spectacular butterfly garden. Juliet Teixeira



## Gardening 101: Composting by Rubie Chase - Attleboro High School



Composting is a resourceful way to recycle organic waste as a tool to improve your garden's soil. It is a simple process that can have great results for your plants. Benefits include: reducing the need for chemical fertilizers, keeping moisture in the soil, lower the carbon footprint in the community so it can be used for the garden, and the production of beneficial bacteria. You can buy organic compost or try making your own. There are three types of materials; Greens, Browns and water. The formula should be a balanced mix of green and brown materials.

Avoid meat, dairy, grass or other material treated with pesticides or herbicides, or cat/dog manure. Make sure the things you are using are biodegradable, meaning able to be broken (con't)

down by bacteria. Here is a list of what you can add to your compost formula.

#### Greens:

- Grass clippings
- Hair, fur
- Coffee grounds
- Banana peels
- Apple cores
- Carrot and other peels,
- Fruits and Veggies

#### Browns:

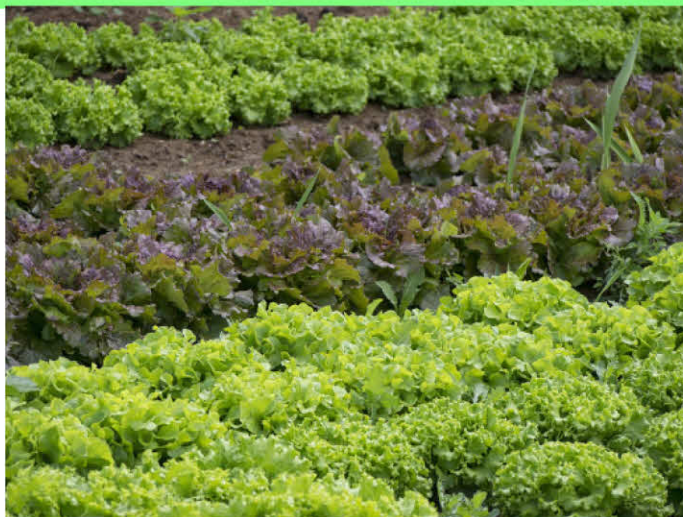
- Small stems, and leaves (bottom of pile)
- Hay/straw
- Paper, cardboard (shredded)
- Saw dust, wood ashes, Cotton
- Cleaned eggshells
- Paper tea bags
- Horse, chicken, rabbit, and cow manure

Together, the brown material will produce the carbon energy for the plants and the greens material will provide the nitrogen. Then water the pile regularly.

Start by putting some small branches on the bottom of the pile or container. If using a container provide some drainage holes on the bottom. Next, pile some greens, then browns and continue in alternating layers. When stacking, put a little garden soil or non-sterilized compost between the layers to inoculate with bacteria. Add water to moisten but not saturate the pile. Weekly mix the pile and add water to keep moist. When brown and crumbly, use in your garden.

## What's Happening at the Barrows' Farm in 1719

Some crops, such as beans, are continually being harvested as they ripen. This now gives the youngest members of the family jobs that are not just guarding fields and fowl. After the beans are shucked, they are spread on the ground to dry. If they are lucky, it is on cloth but to waste expensive cloth for this purpose is rare. Have you even wondered why here are warnings on bags of dried beans to inspect for stones? The youngest children now have to perform guard duty keeping wild birds and their own fowl from getting the beans. These beans become a major source of nutrition, particularly protein, in the months until the harvest starts the next year. Hay is also being harvested for the winter-feeding of the livestock.



As the maize ripens, it is picked, the husks shucked back, tied in bunches, and hung on sticks in the barn, corn house, or corncrib to dry. It could be left on the stalks to dry, but the deer, crows, and ravens could then get it or rain could cause it to rot or get fungus. Once harvested, the blades (leaves) and the tender tops of stalks will also be harvested and used as fodder for the animals. The stalks will then be pulled and used as compost for leaving them to rot in the fields can cause disease.

Once a field is cleared, the colonists want to plant a cover crop, predominately winter rye. In later times, Thomas Jefferson recommended clover or hairy vetch as they put nitrogen into the soil for the next year's crops. Corn in particular, needs a lot of nitrogen. The beans that were planted with the corn also puts nitrogen into the soil. The cover crop stops erosion, prevents weeds by smothering them and introduces organic matter when plowed under (green manure). The colonists did not have herbicides so if the fields were covered with weeds they had to wait for them to dry and then burn them, a common practice by the Native Americans.

The women and children are harvesting the "kitchen garden", too. Pumpkins and squash are chopped up and allowed to dry in the sun, cabbage is turned into sauerkraut, and root vegetables are stored in the root cellar. If kept cool and dry they will last a long time. They are also cleaning and drying or smoking any fish or game that is caught. Everything is being prepared for the long winter. It is a balancing act with the weather to get the best harvest.

## Updates, Comments, and Interesting Reading



The **Environmental Voter Project** is a volunteer organization that is working to get more environment and conservation conscious people out to vote. Through this program, these people are encouraged to vote and environmental priorities are put into the consciousness of politicians who want their votes. The EVP is currently looking for volunteer interns in Boston, for 12 weeks, to become part of this program. If you are interested: [www.environmentalvoter.org/jobs/intern](http://www.environmentalvoter.org/jobs/intern).

**NASA** has reported an 84% increase in fires (over 80,000) in Brazil over 2018 figures so far this year. Brazil has the world's largest rainforest which produces 20% of the oxygen on the planet. This is so critical to the world's and our existence and livelihood that it is being brought up as the lead topic at the G7 Conference in France. Every little bit of trees we save here helps offset the devastation there.



The current administration is trying to bypass the **Clean Water Act** of 1972 by allowing the dumping of wastewater treatment and industrial wastewater into groundwater aquifers. If this happens, wastewater will make its way to our reservoirs and drinking water wells.

The **Appalachian Beekeeping Collective** in Summers County, West Virginia is attempting to train former coal miners and low-income families to become beekeepers to improve income in the area hit hard by the decrease in the use of coal.

**Brazil** has lost 500 million bees in three months, mostly from increased use of pesticides and land clearing.

Even though **mercury** levels are decreasing in the oceans, mercury levels are increasing in tuna, salmon, and swordfish because global warming of the oceans requires these large fish to eat more to survive. Smaller fish still have less mercury but it accumulates in the larger fish.

There is also a decrease in **shellfish** on the east coast of the United States because of the warmer waters.

### Trail safety

1. Plan: Tell someone where you are going and check the trail map and weather.
2. Wear suitable clothing and footwear.
3. Bring your cell phone, just in case.
4. Bring water if it is hot.
5. Use bug spray and check for ticks when you return.
6. Observe but stay clear of wildlife, particularly if you have a dog. We have deer, coyote, fox, fishers, rabbits, skunks, raccoons, and snakes among others in our areas.
7. Keep dogs on leash, check their feet when through walking for splinters from wood chips.
8. Due to current the EEE risk in Attleboro, cover up, use bug spray, and avoid mosquito areas.
9. Enjoy.



Bishop Street

## Buy Local Farm Products for Better Taste and Nutrition

## Contact Us

Why does local produce taste better? Local farms can produce more flavorful and tender varieties of produce that are ripe at the time of picking. The farms marketing for stores produce hybrids that have thicker skins to withstand travel. They are also harvested before being fully ripe, as it takes four to seven days to get them to market.

Once most vegetables are harvested, the sugars start to turn to starch and the nutrients degrade. You can even test this by going to the store and buying two ears of corn. Shuck one in the store and leave the husk on the other and wrap the stem with plastic wrap. Wait two days and then shuck the other and cook them both. Provided they were both harvested at the same time, the unshucked one will taste sweeter, as leaving the husk on

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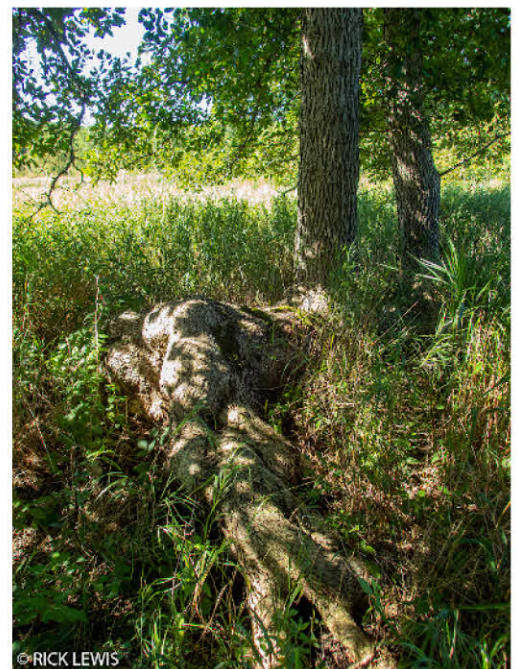
delays the degradation.

Now, bananas and fruit on the other hand, tend to produce more sugar as they ripen and turn brown but once picked they no longer absorb but lose nutrients. Buying local also lowers our carbon footprint by not using the fuel to transport to market. Local farms create jobs, help preserve the environment and open space, cleans the air, promotes the local economy, and promotes a safer food supply.

So buy local from farmers' markets and farm stands. You will be glad you did.

## Guided Walk Through Anthony Lawrence Wildlife Preserve

Gary Krofta and Charlie Adler led a group of about twenty people on an educational guided nature walk through the Lawrence Wildlife Preserve on Saturday, August 24, part of the ALT Guided Walk series. Gary pointed out many of the plants native, alien, and invasives in the forested areas, marsh, and along the river. Also pointed out were the native wasps, dragon flies, and moths that were pollinators of the many wild flowers. The natural and developed landscape was discussed along with how weather and time changed the land. The picture shows a swamp white oak tree in the middle of the marsh. It appears this tree fell over in a storm when young because the roots could not hold it in the soft ground. Then the top bent to follow the sun and a branch developed as another shoot. From a distance it looked like two trees but further inspection show the true story. The base root mass is on the left, then the branch/tree, and finally the top to the right. Interesting natural adaptation.



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